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VINDICATION OF THE POLICY OF THE ADMINISTRATION.

SPEECH

OF

Hon. J. H. LANE,

OF KANSAS,

IN THE

SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES,

FEBRUARY 16, 1864,

ON THE SPECIAL ORDER, BEING SENATE BILL No. 45,
TO SET APART A PORTION OF THE STATE OF TEXAS
FOR THE USE OF PERSONS OF AFRICAN DESCENT.

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Mr. PRESIDENT: The present war of slavery against freedom, first opened upon the plains of a State which I have the honor in part to represent; there the black flag of piracy was first displayed; for years the relentless war of despotism against liberty was waged with varied success, in disregard of the rules of civilized warfare. As an American, I must say with profound humility and shame for my country, this unnatural and malignant war had the support of two administrations, which expended influence and treasure without stint, to corrupt the young settlements therein, and to fasten the corroding leprosy of this baleful institution on a free and independent people. In that contest against venial officials and a corrupt institution, we learned that slavery was "the sum of all villainies." And it was then we learned that the colored man possessed the qualities of the soldier.

Guided by this experience, and the knowledge thus obtained, immediately on the fall of Sumter I commenced urging in public speeches and writings the necessity of an emancipation proclamation, and the arming of the blacks. I commenced this work as a poineer confident that the public sentiment of the country would finally endorse the proposition. Even at that early hour in my intercourse with the President of the United States, I found him anxiously weighing the grave necessities I was urging, and with mind and will self-poised, ready to hurl these reserved forces on the rebellion, at the juncture when public sentiment in the loyal States would sustain the act; for it must not be forgotten that such stu-

pendous measures required a political and moral preparation in the public mind to justify such strides in the advance, else the whole fabric of northern society might have been shaken by a counter revolution. Their adoption required in advance the education of the loyal people of the free States to the necessity and wisdom of such measures. For generations the public mind had been taught to regard slavery as a thing sacred to the several States holding slaves; a thing too sacred to be criticised or touched by the stranger, while behind this blind of sacred right the traitor plotted his treason at his leisure, planned his schemes of rebellion, and hatched the political brood of vipers who have at last fastened on the fair form of our republic, trusting, by their devilish skill and power, to strangle and slay the fairest form of civil government the world has yet seen. It was, therefore, no mean task to eradicate the teachings of many years, and bring the public mind up to the safe condition of support to measures such as proposed in the proclamations of emancipation, and arming the men of color in aid of those measures.

Here, in this city, in April, 1861, after delivering a speech in favor of those two propositions, I was notified by many friends if I insisted upon it it would crush our party, and was warned that my life was in danger from the knife of the assassin. Even in my own State I was obliged to keep from public view, for months, the first colored troops we raised therein. And I here express the opinion that had either of these measures been adopted at that date, a counter revolution would have been inaugurated in the house of our own friends. It is well known to the truly able Senator from Ohio, that when the proclamations were issued they came near throwing into the hands of the opponents of the Government the political power of the country, which at that date would have been equal to the withdrawal of our armies from the field, the triumph of the rebellion, the overthrow of liberty, the disgrace and ruin of her defenders, while the hopes and liberal aspirations of earth's crushed millions would have been extinguished for generations to come, for the courts of Europe would have acknowledged the Confederacy, and rejoiced in the decline of pure republicanism.

In my opinion, when the history of this Administration comes to be written, the proudest page therein will be the record of the fact that Mr. Lincoln had the self-possession, the wisdom, and sagacity to restrain himself and friends from issuing the emancipation proclamations and arming the blacks until public sentiment was well nigh ripe to sustain him. To have acted thus before the 22d of September, would have been to have acted too soon. It would have imperilled the political power of the Government, a matter we could not afford to loose then any more than now.

From the establishment of this nation to the present time, the Hand of an all-wise Providence has been seen in directing our destinies. In doing this He has always furnished proper instru-

ments. In founding the country He put forward a man of singular ability in mind and body, a type of the aristocratic age, to lead our armies and direct our deliberations. In this, the second great struggle for life and liberty, he has raised up in the economy of His Providence a type of the republican age, a man of the people, uniting prudence and firmness, wisdom and simplicity, integrity and sagacity, generosity and elasticity of spirit, in a singular degree, with that practical knowledge of men and things which places him, head and shoulders, above his peers for all the purposes of government. In the midst of such a storm, with him as the pilot, the ship of state has thus far passed through the breakers which have threatened her on either hand ; and posterity will admit to his honor that the most dangerous acts, and yet the most beneficent of his Administration, were the acts of September 22, 1862, and January 1, 1863.

The proclamations of these dates are not valuable because they freed the slaves at the time of their issue! They did no such thing. They reached no slaves within the lines of the enemy ; and all the slaves of disloyal masters, who were within our lines, were free under the law. The country was complaining for lack of a policy, and none were more loud in their complaints than the Senator from Ohio. The proclamations were intended to supply that want of the country—*a policy*. By following this policy we know that this fearful, wasting struggle, will result in a permanent peace, to us, and those who come after us ; that the cause of the rebellion is to be forever removed from the land, so that, on the close of the war, or soon after, the stars and stripes shall float over the heads of none but freemen.

The proclamations of Fremont and Hunter amounted to nothing, except as indications of the course of public sentiment and the rapid ripening of opinion. Had they not been modified they would have been inoperative in freeing the slave. As a matter of course they furnished no general policy : they were but unauthorized efforts to do out of place and time what their superiors were carefully maturing and preparing to do at the proper time. Let it not be forgotten that Mr. Lincoln has had two great bodies of loyal men to carry with him in all his war measures—the party that elected him, and that which supported Judge Douglass and Messrs. Bell and Everett. The first has clamored for action in the direction of the most radical measures. This I know, for I have aided to swell that cry. The latter, following reluctantly at first, actuated, not by party zeal, but from a love of country and liberty, have followed Mr. Lincoln's lead when he has not gone too fast; and his wisdom and prudence have been shown in not breaking with them by going too fast, but in carrying them along with him and his measures.

The policy controlling the conduct of the war has been announced in the several proclamations of the President, and has been accepted by the loyal men of the country, together with that

much-dreaded measure—the arming of the blacks. This policy is being pressed forward with vigor and energy; and surely it is high time to arm our blacks in the defence of republican liberty when the chief Imperialist of Europe has dared to export from Egypt Ethiopian soldiers, and plant them on our southern borders, to aid him in his contest with the republicans of Mexico. Such a step, by such a man, is a note of warning to the people of this country, calling for prudential measures, yet measures in harmony with international peace. This is a time for careful and profound reflection on the movements of the armed millions that now crowd earth's surface, and our prayer to Almighty God is that no more *such* come this way, while duty requires us to arm to the teeth all who are capable of bearing arms in the defence of liberty and right.

Another step remains to be taken under the wise and beneficent policy of the Administration. The colored man is to be freed. To place this beyond question or doubt we must guard against his being re-enslaved upon the reconstruction of the Union. This can only be done by an amendment of the Constitution, "declaring that neither slavery nor involuntary servitude, except for crime, shall be permitted in the land."

The black man freed, and his re-enslavement rendered impossible by fundamental law, then comes the last step in the programme to answer safely, correctly, and forever, the question: What is our duty as legislators legislating for posterity? What is our duty toward this disfranchised race? Uneducated, dependent, they look to us as helpless infancy, requiring direction, protection, and to a great extent subsistence, and at this time instruction how to obtain it. Emancipation leaves them in the midst of unfriendly influences, and an unfriendly people, who, being forced to accept the emancipation of their slaves, will by all means in their power seek to undo what you and your armies have done. It is proposed by some to settle them down on the old estates of the South; this in view of the well-known temper of the Southern masses, is of doubtful propriety, and will, in my opinion, result in a second civil commotion in the course of a few generations; nor will justice to the black man permit us to hide from our eyes the fact that his quiet requires removal from the scene of his former servitude and degradation. I cannot do better than recite here the sentiment of the report of the committee on this bill—that the nation should make a reasonable effort to secure for the millions of freed men proper homes in a habitable and desirable country on our south-western border, where climate and country will be congenial to the wants of our people of color, and where, by acquiring an undisputed title to the soil, and an independent local organization, they may enjoy the privileges of republican civilization, and there concentrate their whole strength for mutual improvement.

In exercising our judgment as legislators without prejudice or

passion, and regarding the best interests of both races, we are free to say, that it appears good policy for us to concentrate, by every prudent means consistent with their free choice, the large mass of our freed men in the country named in this bill.

By this act we solve the question, What shall be done with the negro? which has troubled the dreams of anti-emancipationists, and, I have no doubt, actually retarded the work of emancipation heretofore.

The Territorial Committee very properly have declared that a strong desire for a title to the soil is a marked characteristic of the people of our country; and it is reasonable that the man of color should partake of this feeling. We presume that it will not be disputed that a quiet title thereto is indispensable to the proper development and improvement of any country, whether in possession of whites or blacks; and that an unsettled title is the worst form of agitation that can afflict any family or race in time of peace—a condition to be deprecated, to be avoided. Wisely your committee express the fear that this will be the fate and future of the freed men if they remain in the older States once slave, for the majority race, by the aid of courts and laws, will keep their rights and interests unsettled in each of those States, unless by fundamental enactment the Government of those States should be placed in the hands of colored men. This would be impossible if attempted, hence the immediate wants of the country, as well as common equity, impose upon the Government in its attempts to quiet the disturbed social structure of the South, the necessity of founding a community, where the men of color will be the majority race, possessing undisputed sovereignty over their own affairs, and all the rights which spring from eminent domain.

Observation and experience teach us that the black man cannot hold his ground against the grasping cupidity of the white so long as the theatre of competition is confined to northern latitudes. Experience further teaches that the man of color is safe from the cupidity of the white man when the tropical climate becomes his ally and protection. When he has reached the point of the tropical or semi-tropical lands, the vigor of his constitution makes him lord of the soil, so that the destiny of the whole tropical belt, in our opinion, is to pass under the future empire of the educated and civilized children of our freed men.

Mr. President, with these convictions, it appears to me expedient that we make an earnest effort to secure a country of sufficient capacity for the accomodation of four millions of persons, should so many wish to go thereto; for be it understood that we leave to all the right of choice to go, or stay in the older States; yet, while doing this, we cannot refrain from expressing the conviction in the most formal and solemn manner that it is the duty of the man of color to remove with his family and effects to the land indicated in this bill, and to induce his people to accompany him, having in his mind the noble purpose to concentrate his race in that locality

with the view of gaining the support, protection, and power that numbers will afford.

While we admit that there is now a large measure of sympathy for the colored race developed in the public mind by the antagonism of this war, and the struggles over him and his interests between the contending sections of the white race, yet on the close of the war, when human passions return to their former course, the anger of the white man is stilled, the passions and affections involved by this armed antagonism sink to repose, and the public mind returns to the various channels of business, commerce, and self-interest, the known cupidity of our race will again assert its sway and hold in abeyance the now well developed sympathy for the colored man produced by this rebellion. Especially will this be true in the States once slave, for there the white population will regard the negro as an enemy and treat him accordingly.

Can we expect the white man to be less selfish toward the man of color than he is toward his own race—look at the conduct of your own people toward one another; do not oppression, fraud and wrong curse the land; are not the weak and unprotected borne down; will the man who tramples in the dust the rights of his own kindred and race be less exacting, less oppressive with the man or race of men to whom he is disposed to credit much of the disquiet of his country? The supposition is preposterous. Let us then form our own judgment by the heartlessness of the general mass of our people, and not by the philanthrophy of the few; for, in my opinion, what has been the history of the two races in the past will be their history, to a great extent, in the future, if they remain associated in this country as majority and minority races.

This question, sir, after all, is a question of majorities—to remain such through all coming time; for the prejudice, unfortunate as it may appear to some, which the white race entertains to a legal and honorable amalgation of the African with the people of this country, will preserve a dividing line between them as long as the world stands; nor should Senators hide from their eyes the fact, that without this legal and honorable admixture of the African blood with that of our race the former can attain to neither social nor political equality. I give it here, as my opinion, that the individual politician, or political party, that comes before the country on the platform of amalgamation, either expressed or implied, will be crushed as by an avalanche. Then the freedom we achieve for them is not such freedom as their long-suffering, their universal loyalty and important services in this rebellion demand at our hands.

With this social and political inequality, is it to be expected that they can develop to that point to which they are capable? Is it for us to leave such a mass of disfranchised labor to the caprice and cupidity of the capitalists of the ruling race, many of whom are as heartless as the slave-master. To leave such an

element in our social structure is to present the strong temptation to introduce an aristocracy as dangerous to our republican form of government as that we are now struggling to subdue.

Unless you can assure them social and political equality, I submit that it is a duty we owe ourselves and our children after us, to separate them from us, and place them in a position to govern and care for themselves. Give them a country of their own; give them homes; actual title to the soil; give them the rights and franchises springing from the actual dominion of the country where they reside. Exercise over them for the time being a territorial government, selecting officers whose every pulsation will be in sympathy with them. Thrown upon their own resources, thus educated and elevated, by having a country they can claim as their own, all the circumstances reminding them of their slavery and degradation being absent, they, in my opinion, would soon demonstrate to the world capacity for self-improvement and self-government that will exceed the most sanguine expectations of their friends.

My second reason is, we can thus plant at the door of Mexico, which is a semi-tropical country, four millions of good citizens, who can step in at any time, when invited to strengthen the hands of that republic.

The place of the black man in the older States will soon be filled up by foreign immigrants, who, in filling the vacuum, will give no shock to the sensibilities of a kindred race, or endanger the future peace of the country in the process of naturalization, which will incorporate them into the mass of our people without reducing the blood or changing the mutual status. In this way do we avoid all the disastrous consequences which must follow from that repugnance to legal amalgamation with the African almost universal among the people of the North and Northwest. Therefore policy of the highest order requires that we establish on our southern border an independent, self-sustaining and self-reliant people, loving liberty, and ready to protect it, whose first effort to illustrate the principles they have derived from us may perchance be a combination to expel the imperial eagles from lands once consecrated to republican liberty.

Shall we extend to colored men the opportunity of voluntarily separating from us? That conceded, all obstacles to this humane design at once vanish. I do not propose to remove them at the expense of the Government. They must go as other emigrants do, at their own expense. The sum required for the journey can easily be brought within the limits of their resources.

First of all, therefore, the land of their destination, their land of promise, I think I may say, must be easy of access. They should be able to move there, as did many of our ancestors when seeking their western homes, in wagons, overland, taking their wives and children, their household furniture and their agricultural implements with them. The country should be adjacent to the

sea coast and traversed by navigable streams, so that colonies or companies may be able to reach it in a body, should emigration in large numbers be desirable.

Such a location, Mr. President, is the country selected by the provisions of this bill. It is bounded upon the south by the Gulf of Mexico, on the east by the Colorado River, on the west by the Rio Grande, on the north by almost impassable mountains, securing them from the inroads of hostile Indians. Through Kansas, or southwestern Missouri and the Indian country, it can be reached over the best natural roads in the world; through friendly and sympathizing communities. From Louisiana the way is direct by the Red River or the Gulf. In respect to location no territory on the face of the globe is more desirable for the habitation of the black man.

Now permit me for a moment to refer to the resources of this section and its natural adaptation to the requirements of the colored man. First and foremost the climate is congenial to his nature. The soil is universally arable, and produces bountifully with moderate cultivation. The surface is fine, deep prairie, yet supplied with timber adequate to the wants of the settler, presenting no obstacle to the opening up of farms. Such is the dwelling place to which your committee desire to invite the emancipated colored man. It is believed that the President of the United States, were he authorized, could, by proper exertion on his part, obtain title to the greater portion of this territory on the most reasonable terms.

In this connection I call the attention of the Senate to the following extracts from Brannan's Texas, 1857, page 22, which the Committee on Territories have appended to their report on this bill:

"I have, for convenience, divided the State by certain arbitrary designations, as follows, namely: northern counties, western counties, &c.

"Western Texas is an extensive country, and has many varieties of soil and productions. Excepting on the bottom-lands of the rivers and water-courses, the people are mostly engaged in stock-raising, many of them exclusively, and others in connection with farming. The region below 30° and west of the Rio Grande is very subject to long droughts during the summer; still the crops on the bottom-land seldom fail, no portion is sickly, but all is favorable to man and beast. The principal grass on the prairies is the far-famed mesquit, deservedly renowned for its universal abundance and nutritious qualities. During all the winter season, and after it has become sere and yellow, cattle and horses will eat it with the same avidity and benefit as when green. Of late years large quantities have been cured and baled for distant markets. I would advise emigrants who want good, cheap lands, with plenty of mesquit prairie for stock range, to purchase on the Nueces, Rio Frio, or some of their branches. This is a desirable part of western Texas, and has as many natural advantages as can be asked by any reasonable man. Land sells from $1 50 to $2 per acre. The timber on the streams is pecan, hackberry, several kinds of oak, and mulberry; on the prairies are much live-oak and mesquit timber. There are many other portions of the West where the land is better adapted for raising cotton, but none that will so well suit the emigrant of moderate capital, and fill the measure of his utmost expectations and desires."

Of the upper portion of this Territory Cordova says, page 49:

"The valley of the Rio Grande is in the vicinity of 32° north latitude, and for one hundred miles is capable of sustaining a large and prosperous population. It grows fine wheat, corn, fruits, and a variety of vegetables, all of the best quality, and is proverbial

for producing excellent grapes, from which a native wine of very good quality is made. There are between fifteen and twenty thousand Americans and Mexicans already in the neighborhood of El Paso, and the valley is highly cultivated for many miles, beautiful gardens, with fine apricots, peaches, plums, and various other fruits, abounding."

In Moore's Description of Texas, page 8, he says:

"In the western countries the prairies are beautifully diversified with small groves of timber; most of the prairies of this level region, however, are entirely open, and resemble broad, grassy lakes. The soil of the prairies is remarkably uniform in its character throughout the whole country, consisting generally of a black vegetable mold, varying from four inches to four feet in depth, resting on beds of sandy or clayey loam. This soil differs but little in fertility from the soil of the bottom-lands, and is covered with a dense mass of grass, affording an inexhaustible supply of pasturage to the cattle of the southern planters. There is probably no class of men upon the globe who can live more independently or with less care than the herdsmen of Texas. Their herds of cattle feed out upon the prairies or in the wooded bottoms during the whole year, and require almost as little attention as the wild deer." * * * * * *

"Many of the Texan farmers own several thousand head of cattle, and derive from them a very large income."

Again, on page 13, he says:

"The ordinary crop of cotton in the level and undulating regions is from a bale to a bale and a half to the acre; of maize, from forty to sixty bushels; of potatoes, from four to eight hundred bushels. Two crops of maize and potatoes are frequently raised the same year; both the common potato and yam, or sweet potato thrive well." * * *

"The few attempts that have been made to cultivate sugar, tobacco, and silk, prove that these productions can be raised with great facility, and will, within a short period, become the staples of the country. It is found that the sugar-cane attains a larger size in Texas than in Louisiana; and, as the climate is milder, a larger portion of the plant matures; consequently the product of sugar to the acre is considerably greater in the former country."

Some of us, were it possible, would be glad to set aside South Carolina or Florida, as the future home of the colored man. I have frequently gone so far, myself, as to say that I hoped the time would come when the foot print of the white man should not be found on the soil of South Carolina. But to-day, we are deliberating for the good of the colored man and the peace of future generations. I think we can afford under present circumstances to sacrifice all feeling to such a noble end.

We may slay all the male traitors of South Carolina, and yet, at the close of the rebellion, to their wives and children, being in occupation and holding the fee of the land, amnesty and pardon must necessarily extend. If we should succeed in settling the black man upon some portion of those States he would be persecuted and oppressed so that his life would be a burden to himself, and his title to his home held by an uncertain tenure. It is a well founded presumption that the slave holder and the members of his family will always hate the person who has been released from their service against their consent, and will continue to persecute him to the latest generation.

It is not possible to re-educate a whole population like that of the South, or change their prejudices as to their former slaves. The idea of depopulating an entire State to make a place for new inhabitants is not likely to gain much favor. It is a question of morality whether it should be done.

The same objections would hold in respect to Florida as to South

Carolina. In addition, its unsettled sections are densely wooded, and a large proportion of the territory is waste, untillable land. The opening up of a farm would be a work of time and money. What we need for the immediate necessities of this people is a locality that will come as near yielding a spontaneous support as can be obtained, and especially one where the herds of stock may support themselves all winter by grazing, as well as during the summer months. In Florida, settlements would be widely separated from necessity, but on the territory of the Rio Grande they would be compact. In South Carolina, Florida, and the States once slave, the colored people would be among those who would despise them. On the territory of the Rio Grande they would have friendly Indians upon the north-east, and on the east Texas, which consulted, and consenting in the settlement, would become their friend and protector. On the west Mexico, whose inhabitants would give the colored man a friendly welcome, associate with him as an equal, and if he desired it, would grant him the privilege of citizenship. There would be marrying and giving in marriage. The institution of matrimony would be honored and respected among them. The blur of illegitimacy would be forever wiped away from their posterity. This people would stand before the world a respected community and an honored commonwealth.

Neither South Carolina nor Florida are adapted to grazing, while the territory of the Rio Grande is eminently so. If I may be allowed the expression, I would call it the elysium of stock. If you had seen, as I have, during the months I was stationed there, the immense droves of cattle, horses, and sheep subsisting throughout the whole year, troubling the owner no more than the wild deer, you would acknowledge that my statements are unexaggerated.

The subject of expense has been mooted by the distinguished Senator from Masachusetts. I respectfully submit to him and to the Senate what detriment is likely to follow to the public treasury from vesting in the Government a title to land, the only claimants to large bodies of which will be traitors. In doing this great act of justice to the colored man the question of expense should not be raised. But in my opinion, Mr. President, the policy proposed, if adopted promptly and heartily, will, instead of a public burden, prove highly remunerative to the country. In a few years this territory of the Rio Grande would far outstrip any State in this nation in the production of sugar, cotton, rice, the cereals, and the herds of stock. A country teeming with such an abundance of the prime essentials to human sustenance would soon refund any amount paid by the Government.

The chief portion of the expense of emigration must be paid by the colored man himself. And what greater incentive to industry and economy can he have than the prospect of a removal to a section, which seems to me especially designed by nature for his country and his home. If properly encouraged by the people and

by Congress he will not ask the hand of public or private charity to pay the cost of his transportation thither. From the day the well-assured hope of such a destination is held out to him will date those stimulating efforts at elevation and culture which must precede the independence of his race.

The last section of the bill under consideration provides for placing the great work in the hands of the Commissioner of Emigration. This gentleman has been engaged upon the subject for fifteen or twenty years, laboring assiduously, and I believe with considerable success, in moulding public opinion to the absolute necessity of a separation of the two races. He is a man of ability, of integrity, a Christian whose sympathies are with the race proposed to be benefited by the bill. In my opinion, no one can be found to whom the important duty may be more safely intrusted.

This bill also provides for diverting the funds already appropriated for colonization purposes abroad to the present object. That fund was originally six hundred thousand dollars. But little of it has been expended. It is believed that this amount will be ample to carry out the provisions of this bill.

We devote immense tracts of land and millions of money to a few thousand savages, who are not producers in any sense, but consumers of the nation's wealth. It is true they have a claim on us as the original owners of the country; but have the negroes no claim? Have not they and their fathers for centuries toiled to build up our country and our country's wealth without pay or reward? I trust the Senate will now admit this claim, and permit us to pay, by this poor boon, a debt which has accumulated through generations past.

The country set apart by the provisions of the bill is to furnish homes to four millions of civilized beings, who, in a few years, will become extensive producers, and I here venture to repeat the assertion which I have made heretofore, that the territory of the Rio Grande, settled as proposed, will, in a few years, outstrip, in the production of cotton and sugar, any of the old States, and will amply remunerate us for any present outlay.

By the theory of the bill, the removal of our colored people must needs be slow, as the movement into their own country would be at their own control. As they thus gradually withdraw, on the close of the war and the establishment of peace, their places will be surely supplied by the numerous immigrants from foreign lands crowding in almost countless millions to our shores, and thus the much dreaded shock to the labor market and the business of the country will be avoided. I wish this point to engage the attention of the Senate. During the last decade the increase of our population by foreign immigration alone has been 2,707,624 persons, mostly in the prime of life, and largely of the class that supplies our labor, and it is confidently believed that this amount will be trebled during the decade we are now in. Nor would I be

surprised to see that number exceeded on the rendering of the next census. It is likewise known to you that when our army comes to be disbanded, a sudden and excessive supply of labor will be thrown upon the country, more than will be necessary to fill up the vacuum created by the migration of the blacks.

Such are the provisions of the bill and the policy it foreshadows. The success of that policy of course depends upon the crushing out of the rebellion, which we trust will soon be accomplished.

I have no doubt about the advantages that will accrue to the political party to which I belong, should it pass. It must occur to the mind of every Senator that it will remove, at one stroke, one of the irritating elements which at times has distracted our own party and given political power to our opponents.

I have a higher opinion of the capabilities of the African race than most of my countrymen. Their servile relation has caused us to underrate and undervalue them as a general rule; but what are the facts? They are faithful, confiding, affectionate, industrious, given to neatness, and generally religious, eminently domestic in their habits, and strongly attached to their home. These qualities are sufficient guarantees that when admitted to rights of landholders and rulers in that land, they have adhesiveness enough to form a community of power, and ambition enough to secure for that community the polish of a high civilization. Extend to them that substantial freedom to which they are so justly entitled; grant them power; the privilege of selecting their own rulers; of framing their own laws, and I venture the opinion that the day will soon come when we will be proud of our proteges.

Reared in the Democratic school, I was taught to revere the memory and respect the opinions of Mr. Jefferson on this important subject, which employed much of the most serious reflections of that profound statesman. He says, in the first volume of his writings, p. 49:

"Nothing is more certainly written in the book of fate than that these people are to be free; nor is it less certain that the two races, equally free, cannot live in the same Government. Nature, habit, opinion, have drawn indelible lines of distinction between them. It is still in our power to direct the process of emancipation and deportation, peaceably, and in slow degree, as that evil will wear off insensibly, and their place be *pari passu* filled up by free white labor."

Time has exploded his deportation plan. We have neither the ability nor inclination to adopt it. I have endorsed his position, that the two races cannot live equally free in the same State, but have failed to discover why we cannot give them the same freedom we ourselves enjoy under the national Government, through a territorial organization, in a territory where they constitute the majority, leaving the question of admission to a higher position therein to time and to those who come after us.

The last census shows that, at the commencement of the rebellion, there were in the State of Missouri 114,931 slaves in Arkansas, 111,115; in Louisiana, 331,726; and in Texas, 182,566, making, in the aggregate, 740,338.

It is safe to say that one-tenth of the slaves of Missouri, six-tenths of those of Louisiana, three-fourths of those of Arkansas, and all those of Texas, reinforced by at least one hundred thousand who have been transferred to the west side of the river from Mississippi and the other States, making in all about 600,000, are now in Eastern Texas, and will at once, with but little expense to themselves or trouble to us, seek the new Jerusalem.

The foundations for the contemplated community may be laid deep and strong by a single order issued in just nineteen words, viz.: "Withdraw the white troops from Western Texas, and supply their places by colored regiments, giving transportation to their families."

It was demonstrated by the discussion last Saturday that the families of these soldiers are self-sustaining. They can select land, open up farms, while their husbands and fathers are fighting your battles and their own. The pay of the soldier will aid them in this praiseworthy effort for independence.

At the close of the war, we should adopt the same policy in mustering out of the service our gallant regiments as was followed at the close of the war with Mexico, in respect to the troops in California. Muster out the colored regiments West of the Colorado if they desire it, allowing them transportation pay to the place of enrollment. This method, allowing half of them to be men of family, with four to a family, would give five hundred thousand settlers.

If I could direct the policy of the Government, I would tender homes to the colored soldiers West of the Colorado, and to the white soldiers the confiscated estates of traitors east of that line, mustering them out at such points contiguous to their contemplated homes as they might designate. What greater incentive to fidelity to the interests of their country could be placed before them.

My sanguine temperament may mislead me, but I am clear in the conviction that as soon as this settlement is a fixed fact the colored race from Canada to the Gulf will be attracted to it. Every avenue to it will soon be crowded by emigrants hastening thither in every kind of vehicle from a wheelbarrow to a mail coach.

Should the Senate adopt this bill, I can tell the man of color that the hour of his deliverance from the bondage of Egypt has come, and that unless he removes he is doomed to sink into a hopeless minority in the older States for all coming time. The last census tells the story of his future.

The increase of population to this country by foreign immigration alone exceeds the increase of the slave and free people of color in

the same period nearly three to one; that of the former being 2,707,324, and that of the latter but 796,947.

You can infer from this the chances of changing the relation of the races by force of numbers. We must ever remain the majority race, and consequently the rulers; they the minority race, with no hope of relief in the older States. The colored man must change his latitute to hold his ground. Wisdom, policy, and a military necessity suggest that he change it at once.

I submit the bill, confident that the importance of its provisions will challenge the serious attention of every Senator. Our gallant army in the field, with the proclamations of the President and laws in aid thereof, insures freedom to the slave, while the proposed amendment to the Constitution which will no doubt be passed by this Congress and sanctioned by three-fourths of the States, secures the colored man from re-enslavement, and this plan extends to him substantial freedom.

Thus that question which has disturbed the peace of the nation during my entire life will be fully settled. Then the republic can commence her career anew, freed from all her clogs. With the shades that dim her lights removed, she will stand forth before the world a guide to the nations, with power sufficient to command the respect of men, and virtue sufficient to secure the approval of the Divine Ruler.

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